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QC QUARTERLY
NEWS-LETTER

An Exciting and Happy Whirlwind

Dorothy Bevis

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The Book Club of California

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An Exciting and Happy Whirlwind

by Dorothy Bevis*

A PHRASE which could be the subtitle for Millicent Sowerby's delightful book *Rare People and Rare Books!*¹ or David Magee's *Infinite Riches*. Or Wilmarth Lewis's *Collector's Progress* or Leona Rostenberg's *Old and Rare* and on through David Randall and John Carter and Jean Peters and A. Edward Newton — and even Richard de Bury with his fourteenth-century *Philobiblon*.

Elizabeth Gray Vining has quoted Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. on words: "A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used."²

The books we make and that we love are in the libraries, private and public — the "skins" of the living thoughts as we design, read, appreciate, and collect them.

Your committee has asked me to speak upon "I Remember When . . .," but when does "when" start? And will you forgive me if the pronoun "I"

1. Sowerby, Millicent. *Rare People and Rare Books*. Constable, 1967. p. 12.

2. Vining, Elizabeth G. *Being Seventy*. Viking, 1978. p. 159.

*Miss Bevis, now retired in St. Helena, California, has had a distinguished career as a librarian, educator, and writer. Her talk was the Edith M. Coulter Lecture for 1978 and was delivered on December 2 of that year in San Diego, at the annual meeting of the California Library Association. The lecture is sponsored annually by the University of California, Berkeley, School of Library & Information Studies.

becomes at times a central figure? Perhaps it should start when I first fell in love with books – away back in Jefferson Grammar School in Duluth, Minnesota, when I learned my alphabet and spelled out my Primer – and awaited with agonizing eagerness for my First Reader (Stone's, as I remember) – and gazed into it with as clutching excitement as if it were Tutankhamon's tomb!

I never recovered. Those were the days of sets on one's family's bookshelves. And so by the time I was nine and ten, I had read all of Scott, all of Dickens, and all of Mark Twain with extras such as my brothers' Henty and Alger, and even *Lorna Doone*. Of course, I didn't know what all the words meant or many of the ideas they held – but who was to stop my charmed tongue rolling out syllables I couldn't pronounce such as "Vesuvius" and "rapidity" and discovering what they were. No limiting rules put boundaries on imagination by first and second grade levels for my reading!

One grew up. One read what was required in a St. Louis High School. But one also found the Cabany Branch Library. Hours were spent in one alcove after another, discovering H. G. Wells and Compton Mackenzie, Rose Macaulay and F. Scott Fitzgerald, but most of all, one discovered poetry. Not the poetry given one to parse, to divide into metres, to identify figures of speech – but the marching beauty of Milton and Shelley and Keats – the piquant delight of Millay, the undertones of Housman, of Alice Meynell. . . .

To California – to a small town named Arcadia very near Pasadena – and to a small college named Occidental which was to hold intellectual excitement, a friendly warmth, a creative draw toward writing, and a beginning awareness toward printing. Ward Ritchie, Lawrence Clark Powell, and I were all touched by the same professors – Benjamin Stelter and Carlyle Ferren MacIntyre – and our lives moved into shape. I transferred to Pomona College for my final undergraduate years and was again moved by a creative surge – "Cut a class if you must," said one wise teacher, "but go out on the Hill and make a great book your own."

Willis Kerr, of loved memory, the Head Librarian, took me into his office and unlocked the glass case which held treasures not placed on the open shelves. He had found me sitting on the floor of the library balcony,

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pouring over *The Amenities of Book Collecting* by A. Edward Newton. And so for the first time, I held in my hands a Dickens-in-parts, the first edition of a Breeches Bible, a small and exquisitely written fourteenth-century Book of Hours from France, a set of eighteenth-century botany prints, copper-engraved and hand-colored, a first edition of *Peter Pan* with the Rackham illustrations. . . . And whenever he was not busy, Mr. Kerr invited me to come and talk about books and printing, to handle with care and to look. How often I have since remembered that very dear and busy man pretending that he was *not* busy and making the time to share "the skin of a living thought" with this eager young student.

The only thing that I knew about my future was that I did not want to teach school. I realized that I must earn a living. I had a deep conviction that it must be with people and books — putting them somehow together. Libraries could be the answer. And so I talked to Faith Smith of the Training School at the Los Angeles Public Library and to Mr. Perry, the Head Librarian, who sent me to a branch for the summer. It didn't take. There was a great business of checking books in and out, of seeing that the cards were properly dated and placed, of filling out overdue notices, of standing at the door in mid-afternoon to see that no official from the Main Library approached without warning while the Branch Librarian had her tea, of the Assistant Librarian not even putting up a dustjacket display without the considered judgment of her superior. Of the putting together of people and books, I saw not a bit. And therefore, with regret, I told Miss Smith and Mr. Perry that librarianship was not for me.

The place where people and books really came together must be a book shop. Any bookseller I had ever met knew the content of his books and had a feeling for the interest and need of the person who made the request. Most particularly, I remembered a shop on Grand Avenue where a friend of mine had purchased a beautiful book — *East of the Sun and West of the Moon* with illustrations by Kay Nielsen, a first edition with all of its exquisite quality of line and design and color. My friend had gone without luncheons in order to save the purchase price of seven dollars and fifty cents. I hadn't known that books could cost so much, but this shop was the home of such books as I had seen in Mr. Kerr's glass case.

And so I called upon my courage, slipped in the open door and was

shown to Ernest Dawson's office in the very back of the long shop. Was it a private office? Of course not! There sat Mr. Dawson at his desk surrounded by secretary, bookkeeper, and shipping clerk with a carpenter sawing and pounding in one corner. He smiled upon me, indicated a tall stool, turned on his hearing aid, and I told him that I wanted more than anything in the world to work for him. Three weeks later his secretary called me to say that a staff member was ill and could I come down to fill in for a week? I hurried down — and stayed for ten years!

Here, books and people did indeed come together and "Father" Dawson, as his staff — and indeed, most of the customers — called him, was known all over the world. He had begun his shop in 1905 with a little over \$100 in cash and a buy of discarded books from the Salvation Army. Before long, he was buying by letter and catalogue from eastern firms and in 1911 began his many travels to the book marts of England, the Continent, and later, Asia. His friendships were worldwide; he believed in the essential goodness of people. He believed in the ability of the members of his staff and he also believed that a staff member would grow to his opportunity. And so he said to me one day: "Dorothy, could you be on the midnight train tomorrow night and buy for me at the New York auctions?" Having worked with rare books for only three years and never having been east of Ohio, I gulped and said "Of course!" At the train, Father Dawson put an envelope in my hand and asked me not to open it until I was on my way. When I opened it, I discovered a ten-dollar bill (a great deal of money for 1932) and a note which said, "This is yours for a special treat. Of course you will make some mistakes in your buying but you will never make the same one twice. You have my faith."

The New York experience was a fairy tale: hard work in the book shops and with the dealers, leaving bids with Arthur Swann for the auctions, calling upon customers who became friends, meeting authors and printers under the wing of Christopher Morley — William Edwin Rudge and his two sons, Mitchell Kennerley — watching with W. S. Hall the editing of the landmark set of *The Boswell Papers*, going with Christopher to his "Three Hour For Lunch Club" and talking with Carl Van Doren and Helen Ferris and Frances Steloff and Arthur Kroch — seeing books through their eyes.

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The second New York trip in 1934 renewed all the acquaintances of the first but added to it a friendship with Rockwell Kent and an unforgettable weekend at his Ausable Forks home in the autumn Adirondacks – including a glimpse of his studio and his great wall paintings of Greenland.

The richest friendship of that trip began in a famous book shop as big as a warehouse and barren of all the niceties except books. It was presided over by Max Harzof, burly, lovable and shrewd – who would say, “If you were only a man, I would know how to talk to you!” One day I had gathered all my possible buys together and was ready to have him give me a price and be on my way when the door opened and I was deserted for another customer. Mr. Harzof brought him over to me and said, “Miss Bevis, I thought you might like to meet Bruce Rogers.” With complete sincerity, I stammered, “not BRUCE Rogers!” Whereupon the dignified, whitehaired gentleman smiled and said, “Does it mean so much to you?” And I answered, “It is as if a god had come right down from Olympus!” To which he replied, “Won’t you come to dinner with me?” And I did for many times in that four weeks. We sat in the hotel lobby and he brought down his proof sheets for the handsome edition of the King James Bible to be officially used in the coronation of the English king. He described the problems of printing, of designing the typeface, of registering the margins of such poetic and irregularly lined texts as the Psalms and the Song of Solomon. And when I left to go west, he gave me the utterly charming little book of the “Letters of T. E. Shaw to Bruce Rogers” (Lawrence of Arabia to us) with a separate sheet of the variations of his famous thistle bookmark – explaining that he had specifically designed a soft cover for the book so that even the cover would give the idea of the informality of a letter. And I have brought that little book for you to see.

The trips to New York, valuable as they were to me in themselves, were really training trips for the great adventure which came in 1936 – the eight months buying trip to Great Britain and the Continent. I sailed off from San Pedro on a Norwegian freighter with Nancy Byrd Turner’s lines singing in my head:

Sing you rhymes and ring you chimes

And, swing you bells of Bow!
When I go up to London
All the world shall know!

All England was in bloom when I landed in May – pink and white hawthorn, chestnut trees with their candles, lilacs, lilies of the valley, and Rupert Brooke's "unofficial English rose."

It was also the date of the most important medieval manuscript sale of the London auction season and so Mr. Cohen of Marks & Company (the famous Marks & Company of 84 Charing Cross Road) quickly walked me through the London Streets to the long-established auction house of Sotheby. I had known it from its dignified, cream-colored catalogues but here, in reality, was the stone building, the wide stairway, the grilled gate, the sales rooms, and the books arranged for display. Here also were the rare book dealers, the great names known in all countries. And in that room was probably gathered the fullest cumulation of rare book knowledge to be found in one place in the world. I, with my seven years of experience, felt like – indeed, was – a kindergartner. But they were all such wise and kind teachers: Ernest Maggs and Bernard Quaritch, Francis Edwards and Lionel Robinson, Mark Cohen and George McLeish, Bertram Rota and George Plummer – a litany of names. The adventures were many and English bookshops were huge – tall buildings usually five stores high with basements and frequently warehouses nearby – packed with books, even up and down the stairways. The American buyer must leave no book unturned for the very one untouched might be the find of the entire trip.

Three books that I found are with me today because I thought that you would enjoy them. These are three of my own "skins of living thought."

One is a part of a vellum manuscript (a part is all I could afford!): the Penitential Psalms from a late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century Book of Hours, probably written and illuminated on vellum in northern France or England. It glows with the lovely bar borders in true gold leaf and crushed lapis lazuli. The smaller initials are all beautifully illuminated and the page of the Litany of Saints fairly dances with color.

A second book which holds my heart for many reasons is the early edition of Eutropius's *History of Rome* completed by Paulus Diaconus. Eutropius lived in the fourth century A.D. and this intriguing edition of his

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work was printed by the Frenchman, Galliot du Pré, in 1512, the first book from his Paris press. His elaborate printer's mark graces the title page in red and black, a medieval border (probably from a printed Book of Hours), and a central figure of a galley setting off to sea bearing the motto "La Vogue Guallée" – undoubtedly a pun on the printer's name. This particular copy is in a contemporary vellum binding. Woodcut initials decorate the opening of each section, crude but intriguing. Up and down the borders are placed small hands with ruffled cuffs pointing to show the reader the parts of the text of particular importance. An early hand has also underlined many sentences.

This was the book as I saw it in London and I knew to whom it should belong: the head of the School of Journalism in a university of the Middle West. Off it went to its new home and was greeted with delight. Some years later, I received a package in the mail and with it a letter from the professor's son who told me of his father's death and the family's desire that I should have the book which had given his father so much pleasure. And here it is!

Two volumes (I have brought you only one) have a story of binding. This eighteenth-century crimson morocco binding was bright in its day and little darkened even in our day. It bears an Irish admiral's coat-of-arms. One can almost hear him telling the binder to make it rich with gold, for it is fairly burdened with gold: at least six border tools, six fine, elaborate columns, urns, cornucopias, floral pieces, rampant lions, golden dots, and a little Chinese man dancing in the center. This entire remarkable galaxy of decoration adorns a King James Bible printed in 1784 in London. A touching little poem to "the Amiable Miss Cuthbert" is inscribed on the flyleaf and dated 1789, perhaps with matrimonial hopes – who knows?

At any rate, a number of years after the European trip I was in New York attending a library convention, and I confess that I skipped a meeting to wander through the Morgan Library. There in a tall case was a stunning exhibit of bindings by Baumgarten, a master binder who worked in London for only nine years before his death. To my amazement, there were the very same patterns of gold tooling that I had found on my little Bible – the pillars, the cornucopias, the rampant lions, and the small

Chinese man. Consulting with Mr. Adams, the Director, we determined that mine were indeed Baumgarten tools but undoubtedly used by his heir, Kalthoerber, shortly after Baumgarten's death.

England for me held three crowning experiences in the field of printing. One was the friendship with George Jones, Printer to the Kings of England and Belgium, whose office was near the Samuel Johnson House in Gough Square and whose home was the gracious Monk barns on the edge of London. A treasured weekend there resulted in a correspondence that ended only with the printer's death. Some day (in this famed retirement that has no time at all) I should edit those letters and glean from them the many words of wisdom in regard to color printing, in which field George Jones had no peer.

The second experience was with May Morris, daughter of William Morris. My letter of introduction to her arrived late in my trip when she was taking a holiday in Cornwall so that I never had the privilege of meeting her. However, after my return to California, came a warm letter on Kelmscott Manor paper expressing regret that we were not to meet but sending me a proofsheets of an original Burne-Jones woodcut from the story of the "Legend of Goode Wimmin" in the great Kelmscott Chaucer. This, framed, hangs in honour in my own small apartment (and you are all invited to St. Helena to see it!).

Most cherished was the friendship with C. H. St. John Hornby, president of W. H. Smith and Sons, Publishers, but more important to all lovers of fine printing, the master of the Ashendene Press with its forty years of superb production. Again, my letter of introduction was late but it brought an immediate invitation to luncheon at the W. H. Smith headquarters. And there I felt I had entered into a Galsworthy scene with the Board of Directors' room lined with its polished wood-panelled walls and its buffet filled with serving bowls of silver. I can't possibly remember what was in them — because I was overwhelmed and shy in the presence of my tall, dignified host. Then we began to talk about books and Mr. Hornby's reserve melted as did mine. I was invited to his house on the Chelsea Embankment next to the one-time house of Nell Gwynn for the very next afternoon, and there we soon sat on the floor in his beautiful

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library, piling his rare and lovely books around us as he talked and I listened.

He showed me most of the known editions of Dante, including early manuscripts and incunabula, which he had studied before choosing the text for his own magnificent volumes. He showed me *The Faerie Queene*, *The Morte D'Arthur*, the Boccaccio, the *Don Quixote*, the charming little *Aucassin and Nicolette*, the Thucydides, the *Song of Solomon*. And he told me how and why he had chosen them – the cutting of appropriate types, the problems of design, whether or not to use one, two or three colors, the decisions about illustrations, about binding.

And then we walked out through his lovely gardens to the small press building itself, and I saw the composing room and the rooms where the presses and types had been – for the Ashendene Press had closed its door the year before. Mr. Hornby was seventy, several of the great artisans who had been with him since the beginning had died, and with the printing of the complete *Bibliography*, the Ashendene Press was dismantled in 1935. Somehow, it did not seem at an end. As we stood there in the little brick building, one could almost hear the sound of presses, the argument and decisions, the laughter and the wit. All of this is somehow caught in the very appearance of the books themselves.

Mr. Hornby crowned my afternoon with a gift. He had shown me the only early manuscript known of a life of St. Clare. We had leafed through the manuscript page by page. It was from this very manuscript that the Ashendene Press had printed its beautiful edition in Italian of the *Vita di S. Chiara Vergine* in 1921. And as I left, Mr. Hornby gave to me for myself, one of the 236 Ashendene copies. And here it is for you to see in its protective solander case.

When I returned to California, I found a large package awaiting me and in its carefully wrapped interior was a complete set of the proof sheets for the *Ashendene Bibliography* with the good wishes of St. John Hornby. I have brought several of the pages to show you.

The awareness of printing as a means of expression, as a possibility of creativity, as an element in making ideas available stirred in all of these experiences. When in 1939 I was offered the directorship of a new press

in Pasadena, I could not refuse the opportunity to grow. This was the San Pasqual Press, named for an old Spanish-California land grant and backed by a large and sound Los Angeles business institution. The president of that board had long been interested in publishing, had made a careful study of it, and was ready to turn the company's printing concern into the beginnings of a native California publishing house – planning that some day it would be a Macmillan or Knopf of the West.

San Pasqual Press would have two parts co-equal: the printing house headed by an able manager and his designer, and the publishing house in my charge with responsibilities in the beginning for all interviews, choice of manuscripts, relations with authors, overseeing of final proofs, discussion of design, plans and contacts for sales. It was so exciting that I felt like a rubber ball bouncing down the street! And Ernest Dawson was so kind and good with his friendship and help and advice.

San Pasqual could not fail for the three top officers of the company were equally interested and supportive, equally proud of the new development. Manuscripts began rolling in but we could not take too many at once. We already had the second edition of Lawrence Clark Powell's *Robinson Jeffers: The Man and His Work*; we had Dr. W. Hardin's *Democracy; Its Strength and Its Problems*; Syud Hossain's *What Price Tolerance?*; Ralph Cornell's handsome *Conspicuous California Plants*; and Blanche C. Wagner's *Tales of Mayaland*. We were to add W. W. and Irene Robinson's *Ranchos Become Cities, the Mission and the Man* by H. Bedford Jones, and the *Heritage of the Valley* by George W. and Helen P. Beattie, which was a history of San Bernardino County with much material never used before.

In our second month, we gave an open house tea for the eminent type-designer, Frederic W. Goudy, who was visiting in Southern California and became our interested and interesting friend. We even toyed with the idea of having him cut a special typeface for us. Book collectors and advertising men and printers and authors poured in our doors that April afternoon and Fred Goudy enjoyed it all as much as we did.

Althea Warren, Librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library, opened the exhibit room of the library for a San Pasqual Press evening – in which our authors, our staff, and our books, illustrations, and manuscripts

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were present — all to tell and show what a native publishing house could be and would become.

To crown our happiness and promise of success, *Ranchos Become Cities* was chosen as one of the Fifty Books of the Year by the American Institute of Graphic Arts and our book designer, Ned Stirling, and the printers modestly accepted the tributes. We launched a lovely little blond, June Simonds — who stopped all work whenever she appeared in the press room — who did exquisite drawings for the chapter headings of *The Mission and the Man*, Bedford Jones's story of the restoration of the Mission of San Juan Capistrano. And the *Heritage of the Valley* became then, and is now, a very scarce collector's item.

But San Pasqual Press died. In one month and by separate causes, the three top officers of the supporting company were dead or incurably ill. The man who became the new president felt that the company had no right to use its investments for the gamble of publishing. The company was willing to keep the printing shop but not the publishing house. The day the articles of unincorporation were read over my head was the very day we received notice of the AIGA award! I fought determinedly for funds both within the company and without — but it was 1939 and even then war clouds were teasing the skies. And so the six months of the life of the San Pasqual Press came to an end — all bills paid, all agreements honored, and another chapter in the printing history of Southern California written.

In the meantime, the University of California Press needed a head of Sales and Promotion and an Assistant Editor, so I joined Samuel Farquhar, the Director, for the creative life within a university press — which is a story all its own. That particular responsibility brought me close again to libraries. I found again in some of the small California towns — where the librarians were the warm, capable, friendly people I knew them to be — that the public library was the center of activity, with children and teen-agers and housewives and businessmen hurrying in the doors for community meetings, or discussion groups, or information, or just for good books to read. I taught "History of the Book" for the University of California Extension Department right in the San Francisco Public Library where I used their rare book and Sutro collections. And I

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came to know Edith Coulter as friend and teacher – for I took her reference courses in the University of California Library School – and I delighted in her strength and intellect, her wry wit and sense of play, her dignity and good judgment, her essential gentleness and the sparkle in her eyes. . . .

The war intervened but once more I saw libraries as integral parts of the community as I travelled to Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and even Alaska for the Coast Guard. I continued to find that libraries did bring people and books together in a very vital way.

So when the end of the war came, Althea Warren talked with me, exclaiming "Why don't you come with us where you belong?" And I did, and as a librarian and a teacher, I have done my best to bring all these experiences with books and people and printing presses and beauty as the "skin of living thoughts."

And I thank you for this time of recollecting with you.

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Our New Quarters and the Inaugural Open House

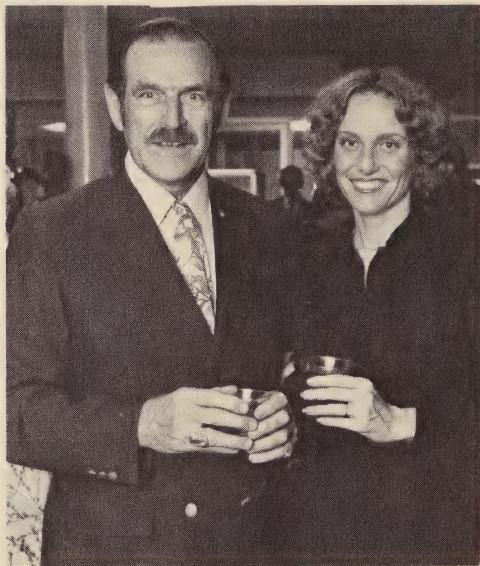
The Open House of February 26 actually had a two-fold purpose. The first was to celebrate our move to new quarters at 312 Sutter Street, Room 510. Many members and guests came to help us celebrate; even the notable San Francisco columnist Herb Caen was there. Mrs. David Potter, chairman of the House Committee, and many contributors provided a magnificent array of edibles.

The second purpose of the evening was to honor Dr. James D. Hart, long-time member and a past president. The fact that he was to be so honored was kept from him until the moment he walked in the door, when he was amazed to find that not only was he the guest of honor, he was also the subject of the first exhibit in the new quarters. Albert Sperisen had mounted an impressive retrospective of Dr. Hart's writing and printing which is described in the Exhibition Notes elsewhere.

Outgoing President Richard Dillon gave words of welcome and reminisced about his terms as president. Dr. Hart, having had some time to recover, was prevailed upon to say a few words.

The photo below and those on the following pages show aspects of the new quarters. The center section features photos of the gala Open House. We hope those of you who were not able to join us will enjoy the experience vicariously.





left, Richard H. Dillon, President 1977–1979. right, Gaye Kelly, Executive Director.



Some past presidents, left to right: Duncan H. Olmsted, Dr. James D. Hart, Mrs. Harold A. Wollenberg, Albert Sperisen, Joseph M. Bransten, Warren R. Howell, and Richard H. Dillon.

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left, Albert Sperisen. right, Muir Dawson, President 1979–1980.

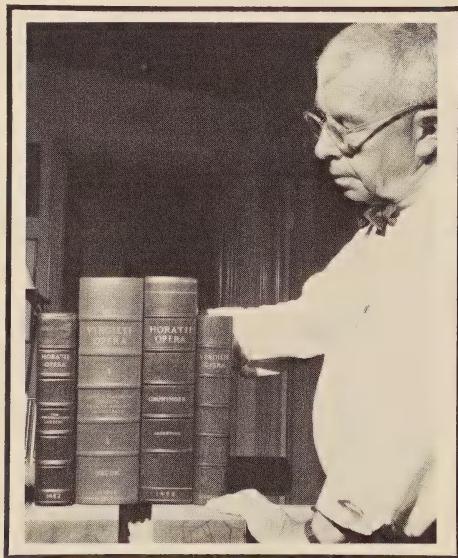


left, Mrs. Muir Dawson, Los Angeles. middle, Arlen Philpott, Tamal Land Press, Fairfax. right, David R. Godine, Boston.

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Donovan J. McCune

with examples of his own bindings executed on volumes from his extensive collection of Latin poets

Donovan J. McCune Bequest

To Members of the Book Club of California: I am pleased to inform the membership that a substantial bequest has come to the Book Club from the estate of Donovan J. McCune, M.D., of Vallejo, California. Dr. McCune died in 1976 but it was only early this year, after the move to the new headquarters was completed, that any indication of the size of the bequest became known.

It came at a time when the Club was having deficits and it looked as if it would be necessary to raise dues in the near future; this can now be postponed. In addition, thought will be given by the Board of Directors to various ways of promoting the purposes of the Club.

Bequests and donations in the past have been vital in keeping the activities of the Club going forward. Most recently the response of the members to the appeal for donations to pay for the move to the new Club quarters was answered by more than a third of the membership. The total amount raised was large enough to pay for more than half of the expense.

The immediate response of the Board was a decision to keep the McCune bequest intact, and to expend only interest income. The purchasing power of the fund will be maintained by re-investment of part of the income. Professional management of the fund and bank custodianship will be arranged. The generosity of Dr. McCune will enable the Club to further extend its usefulness to the worlds of book collecting and fine printing for many years to come.

Muir Dawson, President

In Memoriam: Donovan J. McCune, M.D.

Donovan James McCune was born June 24, 1902, in Bellefontaine, Ohio. He earned his B.A. degree from Georgetown College in 1924 and then studied medicine at Johns Hopkins where he received his M.D. in 1928. He served his internship at Johns Hopkins during 1928 and 1929 and residencies thereafter at Cincinnati General Hospital and Babies Hospital in New York City. He was Professor of Pediatrics at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, from 1944 to 1951. After coming west, he was Chief of Pediatrics at Kaiser Foundation Hospital, Vallejo, from 1953 to 1966 and Physician-in-Chief in Vallejo from 1953 to 1965. He was the recipient of many honors in pediatrics. Upon his formal retirement from Kaiser's Vallejo facility, Dr. McCune commuted several days a week to the Permanente Medical Group headquarters, Oakland, where he served as Staff Assistant to the Executive Director until failing health forced him to remain in Vallejo permanently. A series of heart attacks and strokes immobilized him for many years before his death on April 11, 1976.

A life-long interest in Latin poetry led Dr. McCune through the by-ways of book collecting to bookbinding and, finally, to printing which allowed him to combine all

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his interests. These closely related activities culminated in one of the most unusual colophons of all time which also affords insight concerning its author:

Of this single selection from Catullus, heavily ballasted with autobiography, 50 copies have been made for the sheer fun of playing at printing and the unlikely amusement of friends.

The types are Centaur and Arrighi, 6 pt. The paper is Colophon Text, printed damp with an Adana H Q press, using Falcon Black ink.

The psychedelic cover is the result of almost random arrangement of the Bradley ornaments. Will Leonard Bahr (Adagio Press, Harper Woods, Mich.) ever forgive me!

Begun late June and ended early July 1968. In September, 10 additional copies, designated A through J, were printed with an Albion Demy (18" x 24") on Curtis Rag, dry.

During convalescence from a coronary in January 1969, 5 copies were printed on vellum (at 2 a.m.). . . .

A letter to me, dated 2 November 1965, gives further insights about the Latin poetry and the man:

I have no effective way to express in words my gratitude for your kindness in getting for me and sending the essay on Joannes Secundus. You may have suspected that I plan another disquisition before the Roxburghers at some time when they need a flexible substitute for an important speaker. Given an opportunity to talk Latin classics, I don't give a damn for amenities.

Joannes Secundus was, in passing, quite a guy and a great versifier. Without identification I should not be able to distinguish his poems from those of Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius.

One of the heartrending ironies of his second serious stroke was the complete loss of his knowledge of Latin, which he had read and written with equal facility. He had planned to enjoy his Latin to his dying day in a world where "no one else would be interested in these (Latin) books anyway."

Behind a self-deprecatory facade about his printing was a serious interest in its practical problems and its history. He constantly posed questions to Henry Evans and myself regarding ink, paper, makeready, etc., as they pertained to the handpress. He also gave a scholarly talk on the Barbou printing firm to The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco which was later printed in the *Quarterly News-Letter* of the Book Club, "Les Barbou Imprimeurs, Lyon-Limoges-Paris, 1524-1820" (Vol. XXXI, No. 2). Another article, "Henry Morris: Printer, Paper Maker, Bookbinder, Writer, Publisher," appeared in Vol. XXXII, No. 3 of the *Quarterly News-Letter*.

When he acquired his Albion press and had received details on its weight and size from his agents, Dr. McCune noted to me, "Certainly an elephant; let's hope it isn't white," for the press stood 6'6" high. Its owner was small of stature, not much more than five feet tall, so his solution to the white elephant possibility was to have a plat-

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form built on which he could stand to operate the press. The plumed finial on top frequently sported a beret to add to the informality of this printing establishment, which filled his kitchen.

The kitchen contained the two presses and an iron inking stand; the type cases were elsewhere. There was a refrigerator which had large boxes of dog food on top. The Adana press rested on a sideboard. Consequently, there was little activity of the usual kind in this particular kitchen. Dr. McCune's sense of hospitality, however, always enabled him to entertain his guests royally. Henry Evans and I recall caviar and champagne on one Sunday afternoon. Usually, though, guests were shepherded to a local bistro for food. The good doctor himself preferred a double martini and the conversation to food, of which he took sparingly for existence.

Although his Vallejo apartment was crammed with books, bookbinding tools, and printing equipment, its principal function, to a casual visitor, appeared to be the comfortable maintenance of an aged beagle. Special resting spots were everywhere and the choice places on sofas and the like were "reserved" for this companion, whose chief contribution to Dr. McCune's printing was the name: Beagle Press.

Besides rebinding many of his favorite classics in leather, Dr. McCune sought unbound copies of books, pamphlets, and other material from printers so that he could do the binding himself. I have a number of my own productions in full leather and others in leather combined with special papers. Each is signed in gold, frequently "Religavit McCune" followed by the date. A letter is laid in one of my books and begins, "Bound with much pleasure but little skill . . .," in his usual self-effacing manner. He truly loved and appreciated fine printing and fine bindings and indulged himself in every aspect of the arts of the book until incapacitating illness forced him to forego all such pleasures.

Donovan McCune's support of libraries paralleled his other interests. He was a leader in the fund-raising efforts for a new main library in Vallejo. When he became seriously ill, he donated his beloved Albion press to the Vallejo Public Library where it has been used by former students of mine, among others. He also gave a large number of his fine press books and bindings to the library. His then complete collection of Limited Editions Club books was donated to the Santa Rosa Public Library. The books at Vallejo bear a bookplate I designed for him which reads: "Vallejo Public Library / In Memoriam / Patris / Christopher James McCune / (1868-1955) / Filius / Donovan J. McCune, M.D. / Dat, Donat, Dedicat / 1968."

During his years in Vallejo, McCune also engaged in several financial ventures at a time when only the most astute made profitable investments. He had many real estate interests and was, for instance, one of the original backers of the Heitz Winery in the Napa Valley. The Book Club of California is the beneficiary of this acumen and its programs are assured longevity through his final generosity.

Roger Levenson

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of The Book Club of California was held Tuesday, March 20, 1979, at 11:30 a.m. in the Club Rooms. President Richard Dillon presided. Reports covering the year's activities were given, and the President expressed his appreciation to officers, directors, committee chairmen, and members for their support.

All five directors whose terms were expiring were eligible for re-election. Mr. Muir Dawson, Dr. James D. Hart, Mr. Michael Harrison, and Ms. Dorothy Whitnah were re-elected. Mr. David Myrick declined a second term and Mr. Sanford Berger was elected, thus completing the slate of directors for the term expiring March 1982.

Following the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors met for election of officers. Mr. Muir Dawson was elected President, Mr. Henry Bowles was elected Vice-President, Ms. Gaye Kelly was elected Executive Director, and Ms. Madeleine S. Rose was elected Secretary.

The following committees have been appointed to serve for the year:
Exhibits: Albert Sperisen (Chairman), Duncan Olmsted, Tom Goldwasser.

Library: Albert Sperisen (Chairman), Robert Gitler, Barbara Land, Maurice Powers.

Finance: Wm. P. Barlow, Jr., (Chairman), Henry Bowles, John Borden, Gale Herrick.

House: Mrs. David Potter (Chairman), Mrs. Harold Wollenberg, Barbara Land, Mark Hanrahan.

Keepsakes 1979: Donald R. Fleming (Chairman), Mrs. David Potter, Michael Harrison, Albert Shumate, M.D., Les Lloyd, George Kellar.

Membership: Henry Bowles (Chairman), Norman Strouse, Michael Harrison, Warren R. Howell, Gary Kurutz, Franklin Gilliam.

Publications: Florian J. Shasky (Chairman), James D. Hart, Franklin Gilliam, John Borden, Mrs. R. F. Ferguson, Oscar Lewis, David Myrick, Albert Sperisen.

Quarterly News-Letter: D. Steven Corey (Editor-In-Chief), John Borden, Gary Kurutz, Oscar Lewis, Robert Harlan, Albert Sperisen, Dorothy Whitnah.

Elected to Membership

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$125 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$50 a year.

NEW PATRON MEMBER	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
Gary N. Handler	Carmel	Robert M. Levine
NEW SUSTAINING MEMBERS		
Newton A. Cope	San Francisco	Richard H. Dillon
James Heaton, III	Los Angeles	David Myrick
Roger K. Lindland	Hillsborough	Membership Committee
Murray J. Smith	Beverly Hills	Membership Committee

The following have transferred from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

John C. Combs	Visalia
Mark Sanders	Flagstaff, Arizona
Jack M. Weiss	San Francisco

The following have been elected to Membership since the publication of the Winter News-Letter:

NEW MEMBERS	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
Dr. Joseph A. Baird, Jr.	Tiburon	Richard H. Dillon
Anna Elliott Berger	San Francisco	David Myrick
Roy Bleiweiss	Los Angeles	D. Steven Corey
Robert E. Bond	Fullerton	James Lorson
Wendell B. Coon	San Francisco	Richard H. Dillon
J. Luther Davis	Tucson, Arizona	David Myrick
David Robb Farmer	Tulsa, Oklahoma	Franklin Gilliam
Meyer Friedman, M.D.	San Francisco	S. Gale Herrick
John Gartner	Melbourne, Australia	Membership Committee
Mary Ann Gendall	Vallejo	Helen Lee
Michael R. Goth	Los Angeles	Grant Dahlstrom
Nancy R. Hansen	El Granada	V. J. Moran
Eric Paul Hvoboll	Santa Barbara	A. S. Fischler
Mrs. Meri Jaye	San Francisco	Mrs. Howard Swig
Eric L. Johnson	San Francisco	David Myrick
Benjamin E. Jones	North Hollywood	Gary Steigerwald
Nancy T. Jordan	San Francisco	Deceased Father
Roy L. Kidman	Rancho Palos Verdes	Richard H. Dillon
Mrs. Ann J. Light	East Hampton, New York	Mrs. John J. Ide
Nancy Arlette Melone	Berkeley	Membership Committee
Ruth Kelson Rafael	San Francisco	Barbara Land
Robert R. Schmidt	San Francisco	R. S. Speck, M.D.
Caspar W. Weinberger	San Francisco	Richard H. Dillon
California Polytechnic State University	San Luis Obispo	Robert E. Blesse

Exhibition Notes

The last announced exhibition at the Club was coincidental with the grand opening of our new Club rooms and surprise party for former Club president James D. Hart who is currently Director of The Bancroft Library. As the exhibit was part of the surprise party, too, the postcard announcement read only "This is Your Life," which kept Dr. Hart – and everybody else – in the dark until the grand opening. The exhibit mounted for the first time all of the books Dr. Hart has written to date, right up to his *A Companion to California* (1978) and featured, of course, his many contributions for the Club. In addition there was a complete run of his private press printing, from his undergraduate printing at Stanford under the imprints of The Harvest Press and The Penguin Press to a complete showing of the private Christmas productions from The Hart Press in Berkeley.

Most of the material for the exhibit was loaned by Joseph M. Bransten, another former Club president. One exceedingly rare early broadside exhibited was a first printing of a poem by Ezra Pound, "Mr. Housman's Message," loaned by Ward Ritchie. Only twenty-five copies were printed in 1931 and it has an auction record of \$600. Another rarity shown was an e. e. cummings poem, "portrait," also printed in an edition of 25 copies in 1940. A copy of this was recently offered for \$100. Finally we should mention one of the most elusive of the Christmas productions, Ernest Hemingway's *Two Christmas Tales*, printed in an edition of 150 copies in 1959. But these three are just teasers because Dr. Hart has printed dozens of "first printings" of collected authors since his college days. I am pleased to say that Dr. Hart was delighted – and surprised – and this was a fitting first exhibit in our new quarters.

For one month beginning May 11 the Club will again show the winners of the Western Book Awards for 1979 as selected by the Rounce & Coffin Club of Los Angeles. This is their thirty-eighth annual selection and exhibition.

From August 17 to September 20 the Club will exhibit contemporary bookbindings of members of the Hand Bookbinders of California. This exhibit, sponsored by the Hand Bookbinders, was arranged to coincide with the Wayzgoose: Symposium (see note in Serendipity).

Reviews

John Steinbeck: A Guide to the Collection of the Salinas Public Library. Edited by John Gross and Lee Richard Hayman. Salinas, CA: Salinas Public Library, 1979. 196pp. illus. \$7.50 / \$25.00.

Anyone interested in John Steinbeck will have to have this remarkably well-produced volume. The *Guide* reveals the extent of the serious work that has gone into building an important collection of Steinbeckiana at the birthplace of the author.

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The editors are John Gross who is the director of the library and Lee Richard Hayman who is a high school teacher and a recognized authority on Steinbeck. The publication of the *Guide* was made possible through the generous donation of Adrian H. Goldstone, to whom the book is dedicated.

The table of contents indicates the seriousness of the library's collection. Not only are Steinbeck's books and other written contributions listed, also shown are the library's holdings of manuscripts, galley proofs, typescripts, movie and television scripts. The library owns some twenty-five original letters and folders of correspondence from members of his family. There is also correspondence from friends and acquaintances including Elizabeth Otis and Ray Bradbury. The library also collects ephemera, memorabilia, tape recordings, films, and phonograph records. Among these last are "Tortilla B Flat" and "More Tortilla B Flat" composed by the jazz great Eddie Condon and "Suite Thursday" written by Duke Ellington for the Monterey Jazz Festival.

The development of the collection is spearheaded by the City Council, the newly formed Steinbeck Foundation, and the Steinbeck Committee of the local Chamber of Commerce. The support of the City Council and culturally-minded civic groups and individuals has helped greatly in furthering the growth of the collection, the construction of a special Steinbeck Room, and the renaming of the Salinas main library to The John Steinbeck Library.

The library's *Guide* is one more aspect of the serious collection-building in Salinas. The clear presentation of their holdings and the handsome format of the volume are a tribute to John Steinbeck and have created a valuable research tool. The \$7.50 cost is for the normal softbound volume. Two hundred numbered limited hardbound copies will be available for \$25.00, the proceeds of which will go to the Steinbeck Fund of the library. The book is available from the Salinas Public Library, Salinas, CA 93901.

D. Steven Corey

Gifts and Acquisitions

From the Club's ardent helpmeet and regular benefactor, Barbara Land, we now have a copy of *The Invention of Lithography* by Alois Senefelder, translated from the German by J. W. Mukker and published by Fuchs & Lang in 1911, and printed by The Riverside Press. This is a most welcome gift to the Club's collection on the history of lithography and our thanks to Miss Land for her latest generosity.

From member Ann Rosener, typographical designer and now private press operator, we have received the first two examples from her press named Occasional Works: *The Cat*, being an excerpt from Count de Buffon's *Natural History*, a very charming "first" for her press, and *Pierre Didot and French Book Illustration* by Carol M. Osborne of Stanford, the first of a planned series of chapbooks on the history of printing and book illustration. This, too, is a well-planned and expertly printed essay, condensed from the doctoral dissertation by Carol Osborne — much of it from material based on letters and documents newly uncovered at the Archives Nationales in Paris. Members may remember that it was Ann Rosener who designed the incomparable William Morris catalogue

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showing material from the Sanford Berger collection exhibited at Stanford, and more recently the handsome catalogue of the Whistler exhibition at the Stanford Museum. Our sincere congratulations to Miss Rosener and we look with anticipation to her continuing series of chapbooks.

Some while ago when the Club put on the Leaf Book exhibition we borrowed a copy of *A Noble Heritage* from bookdealer W. Thomas Taylor of Austin, Texas. Dutifully, when the show was over, we returned the book with thanks. In a letter received in reply from this most generous bookdealer he writes, ". . . I had actually intended that the book be a gift to the Club . . .," and he returned the volume under separate cover. It contains original leaves from the Bishops' Bible printed by Richard Jugge in London in 1568 and was presented as a keepsake on the occasion of the dedication of the Bridwell Library Annex, Southern Methodist University, Texas. This handsome gift is a very pleasant surprise indeed and our sincere thanks to Mr. Taylor.

As regular as clockwork the Club has received another group of Toni Savage's exciting and inventive Phoenix Broadsides which are now up to number 160. And from Ribgy Graham, his sometime associate, we have received a catalogue of an exhibition of his work. This also lists places and dates of various exhibits of his work, among which was the show at the Book Club in 1976 which featured both Ribgy Graham and Toni Savage. Also sent along was a charming appreciation of the great Swiss artist Hans Erni, written by Graham and printed by Toni Savage. The work of these two accomplished Leicester printer-designers has added greatly to our knowledge of English private printers. Our continuing thanks to them both.

Club member Sol Columbus has sent an announcement for and the first product of his now-established Seedpod Press at 16 Juri St., San Francisco, 94110. This is a booklet of poems by Vaughn Marlowe with drawings by Drake Deknatel, who also did the special silkscreened cover. The 28-page booklet is competently designed and well-executed and can be had for \$4.00 from the printer-publisher at the above address. Sol, who has been a practicing lithographer, recently toured the country visiting and photographing private press operations. For an exhibit later this year, the Club has plans to use some of Sol's portraits in connection with examples of the output of several Bay Area presses.

A prospective Club member from Grosse Pointe, Michigan, Julius Goodman Jr., sent the library a collection from his private Junto Press. The sundry pieces constitute a delightful run of playful printing ranging from amusing birthday and Christmas greetings for friends to announcements of his private printing and publishing. Since there was no cover letter, we quote for the benefit of readers from *The Third Book of Pressmarks*: "Julius Goodman's Junto Press was handed from son to father! Started by son John and originally dubbed the Poor Richard Press, its direction was assumed by the father in 1959. . . . The press is named for the society founded by Franklin." The Junto's first book *Marks and Maniacs* appeared in 1961 and the Club owns a copy of this book. Many thanks to Mr. Goodman for this interesting and diverting group of ephemera.

Albert Sperisen

Serendipity

Kathy Walkup of the Eucalyptus Press at Mills College has sent along an update of the activities of the press. There are thirteen students in the first semester class and three advanced students. Student projects for the first semester ("Beginning Printing") include work with poetry and prose. The students must work with color, with illustration, and with some format other than a broadside. Lectures are given in all manner of subjects, including typography, elementary binding, editing and publishing, various printmaking techniques, and book design. One of the projects of the spring term is a book of children's poems written by Aurelia Henry Reinhart which will be published under the Eucalyptus Press imprint as a student-designed and -illustrated work.

The press is not funded through regular college sources and relies on endowments for its continuation. Any financial help, which is tax-deductible, of course, for the press would not only insure its continuation but would allow further publications to be produced at the press. Enthusiasm for the course runs high and it is perennially over-enrolled. It is also one of the few such courses around and, with the resurging interest in the book arts, has great potential for the future. Anyone interested in supporting the press or learning more about it should contact Kathy Walkup, Eucalyptus Press, Mills College Library, Oakland, CA 94613.

Book Club members may be interested in a new society which held an organizational meeting at the University of San Francisco on March 17. The Map Society of California has as its main purpose the support and encouragement of the creation, appreciation, study, and preservation of maps and related materials. You need not be a cartographer or a map librarian or even a map collector to join. All interested parties are welcome.

The first president of the group is Dr. Norman Thrower, Geography Dept., UCLA, who is also the head of the Sir Francis Drake Commission. There is a Northern California vice-president, Robert E. Winter of California State University, Hayward. For further information on membership please contact: The Map Society of California, Stuart Auchincloss, Secretary, 702 Marshall St., Suite 500, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Wayzgoose 1979: a Symposium for Bookmakers – August 23, 24 & 25: San Francisco

Join your fellow publishers, printers, typographers, bookbinders, calligraphers, and papermakers at a gathering dedicated to the improvement & promotion of our craft and the application of its traditions to contemporary productions.

Thursday evening: Reception at Richard A. Gleeson Library, University of San Francisco. Friday: Lectures and workshops on a variety of topics at the Urban School. Saturday morning: Panel presentation followed by an open-floor discussion. Saturday afternoon: catered Wayzgoose picnic in Golden Gate Park. Fee for Symposium & Wayzgoose: \$25. Send stamped envelope to Wayzgoose, 719 Clementina St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

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